

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present Amendment the Claims under consideration are 18, 22-30, 32-34, 52, 56-64, 66-68, 71-72, 75-76, 80-82 and 86-88. Claims 1, 2, 4-17, 19, 21, 31, 35-51, 53-55, 65, 69-70, 73-74, 77-79, and 83-85 have been cancelled hereby.

Claims 30 and 64 were indicated by the Detailed Action as allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. The limitations of Claims 30 and 31 were combined into base Claim 18 to express a range of binder to cellulose-coated SAP which clearly defines over the art of record. The limitations of Claims 64 and 65 were combined into base Claim 52 to express a range of binder to cellulose-coated superabsorbent which clearly defines over the art of record. Claims 30 and 64 remain under consideration as representing more specific definitions of the present invention than the amended base Claims 18 and 52. No new matter has been added.

The Detailed Action of 20 February 2004 will now be addressed with reference to the headings and any paragraph numbers therein.

Claim Rejections -35 USC §112

Per paragraph 1 of the Detailed Action Claims 31 and 65 are rejected as indefinite for being broader than the claims from which they depend. Per the above discussion, Claims 31 and 65 are cancelled and their limitations incorporated into independent Claims 18 and 52. The present rejection is therefore believed to be obviated.

Claim Rejections -35 USC §103

Per paragraph 3 of the Detailed Action, Claims 1-8, 12-25, 29, 31-34 and 77-82 stand as obvious over Assarsson *et al.* (U.S. Patent 3,901,236, hereinafter Assarsson) in view of Dodge, II *et al.* (U.S. Patent 5,994,615, hereinafter Dodge) and further in view of Cook *et al.* (U.S. Patent 6,562,743, hereinafter Cook).

Generally, with respect to absorbent webs, Assarsson teaches its coated particulates as being airlaid with wood pulp or placed between two airlaid pulp pads (col. 7, line 45). Dodge teaches a multifunctional absorbent material that has 30-75 weight percent slow rate superabsorbent, 25-75 weight percent pulp, and from a positive amount to ten weight percent binder. Cook teaches an absorbent structure of treated fibers and superabsorbent particles in a ratio of 20 percent fiber to 80 percent superabsorbent at its

highest (see col. 2, line 21 and col. 8, line 28).

None of the references teaches a web of a homogenous mixture of binder and cellulose-coated superabsorbent enabling a highly loaded ratio of over about 85 percent to about 98 percent, per the limitations of independent Claim 18 and claims dependent therefrom. Therefore it is respectfully requested that the rejections with respect to independent Claim 18 and all Claims dependent therefrom be withdrawn.

Per paragraph 4 of the Detailed Action, Claims 35-42, 46, 52-59, 63, 65-68, and 83-88 stand as obvious over Assarsson in view of Dodge.

Per the above discussion, neither of the references teaches a web of a homogenous mixture of binder and cellulose-coated superabsorbent enabling a highly loaded ratio of over about 85 percent to about 98 percent, per the limitations of independent Claim 52 and Claims dependent therefrom. Therefore it is respectfully requested that the rejections with respect to independent Claim 52 and all Claims dependent therefrom be withdrawn.

Per paragraph 5 of the Detailed Action, Claims 43-45 and 60-62 stand as obvious over Assarsson in view of Dodge and further in view of Radwanski *et al.* (U.S. Patent 4,939,016, hereinafter Radwanski). Unlike the present invention, Radwanski is directed to a nonwoven web containing pulp as the absorbent.

Per the above discussion, none of the references teaches a web of a homogenous mixture of binder and cellulose-coated superabsorbent enabling a highly loaded ratio of over about 85 percent to about 98 percent, per the limitations of independent Claim 52 and Claims dependent therefrom. Therefore it is respectfully requested that the rejections with respect to independent Claim 52 and all Claims dependent therefrom be withdrawn.

Per paragraph 6 of the Detailed Action, Claims 9-11, 26-28 and 70-76 stand as obvious over Assarsson in view of Dodge and Cook and further in view of Radwanski.

Per the above discussion, none of the references teaches a web of a homogenous mixture of binder and cellulose-coated superabsorbent enabling a highly loaded ratio of over about 85 percent to about 98 percent, per the limitations of independent Claims 18 and 52 and Claims dependent therefrom. Therefore it is respectfully requested that the rejections with respect to independent Claim 18 and all Claims dependent therefrom be

withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Per paragraph 7 of the Detailed Action, Claims 30 and 64 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. The limitations of Claims 30 and 31 were combined into base Claim 18 to express a range of binder to cellulose-coated superabsorbent which clearly defines over the art of record. The limitations of Claims 64 and 65 were combined into base Claim 52 to express a range of binder to cellulose-coated superabsorbent which clearly defines over the art of record. Claims 30 and 64 remain under consideration as representing more specific definitions of the present invention than the amended base Claims 18 and 52.

For all the foregoing reasons, the Claims as presently amended are believed to be allowable over the art of record. A notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Request For Telephonic Interview

Clearly, there are differences between the present invention and the cited reference(s) involving patentable subject matter. These differences are believed by the Applicants to be properly defined in the present Claims. The Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney (per the provisions of M.P.E.P. § 713) to discuss any further problems or suggest solutions in defining the present invention in order to expedite the case towards allowance before issuing a further Office Action.

Favorable consideration is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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